

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5 1. In a database management system, a method for viewing changes to an original optimization plan for a query having a reference to an original table with data stored in a database, the method comprising:

10 copying the original table excluding the data to define a virtual table;

 providing a virtual index associated with the virtual table;

 replacing, in the query, the reference to the original table with a reference to the virtual table;

15 adding, to the query, a reference to the virtual index;

 determining a new optimization plan for the query; and

20 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising comparing the new optimization plan with the original optimization plan.

3. The method of claim 2 further comprising, before comparing the new and the original optimization plans:

replacing, in the new optimization plan, the reference to the virtual table with the reference to the
5 original table; and

displaying, to a user, the new optimization plan with the reference to the original table.

4. In a database management system, a method for
10 viewing changes to an original optimization plan for a query having: (i) a reference to an original table with data stored in a database, and (ii) a reference to an original index associated with the original table, the method comprising:

15 copying the original table excluding the data to define a virtual table;

changing the original index to define a virtual index associated with the virtual table;

determining a new optimization plan for the query;

20 and

- 00000001,000001
5 5. The method of claim 4 further comprising comparing the new optimization plan with the original optimization plan.
- 5 6. The method of claim 5 further comprising, before comparing the new and the original optimization plans:
 replacing, in the new optimization plan, the references to the virtual table and the virtual index with, respectively, the references to the original table
10 and original index; and
 displaying, to a user, the new optimization plan with the references to the original table and the original index.
- 15 7. In a database management system, a method for viewing changes to an original optimization plan for a query having: (i) a reference to an original table with data stored in a database, and (ii) a reference to an original index associated with the original table, the
20 method comprising:
 copying the original table excluding the data to define a virtual table;

replacing, in the query, the reference to the original table with a reference to the virtual table;

deleting, from the query, the reference to the virtual table;

- 5 determining a new optimization plan for the query;
and

8. The method of claim 7 further comprising comparing
the new optimization plan with the original optimization
10 plan.

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising, before
comparing the new and the original optimization plans:
15 replacing, in the new optimization plan, the
reference to the virtual table with the reference to the
original table; and
 displaying, to a user, the new optimization plan
with the reference to the original table.